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## GERMANY'S AIM IN FOREIGN POLITICS.

BY ARNOLD WHITE.

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THE greatest man who ever lived on this planet was Napoleon Bonaparte. The personalities of his opponents are sliding rapidly into oblivion; while the books, the papers and the memoirs dealing with his character and vices, his views and habits, pour from the printing-press in ever-increasing volume. No statement of Bonaparte's has been more quoted than his memorable prediction that in half a century Europe would be either Cossack or republican. Nearly a century has passed since the date of a prophecy which has been falsified by the effluxion of time, Europe is more monarchical and less Russian than when the prediction was uttered. Although Bonaparte has proved to be in error in regard to the limit of time he allotted for the establishment of republican or Muscovite ideas in Europe, it by no means follows that he was wrong in the principle he sought to establish. Bonaparte, a hundred years ago, like William of Germany to-day, was seeking to form an alliance of the Baltic Powers against England. He foresaw, as we foresee to-day as the issue of the war in the Far East, an awakening of Russia whereby the giant of the North, vigorous after repose, with a virile and hardy population, would arise in its might and fulfil the ambition of centuries by dominating European civilization.

To understand the position of Russia to-day, it is necessary to survey the world politics of the hour; and to do so effectively we must, so to say, take off the gloves and write of things as they really are, not as they seem to be under the banal conventions of a jejune journalism.

The interests of the English and American people in Russia largely, if not mainly, depend on the influence of Russia on the maintenance of peace. The English-speaking public ought to bear

in mind that Russia, owing to her present difficulties in the East, and to her boundary line in the West being denuded of troops and therefore open to Germany, cannot act as she would like to do, and is unable to protest against her actions being attributed to hatred of Great Britain. A great portion of the Russian nation would hail with joy an understanding with England and America, but no *rapprochement* can take place until the present despotic methods of the dissipated and incompetent Grand-Dukes are discarded in favor of a freer régime, whereby Russia shall be ruled by efficient and reasonable administrators. Hatred of England is the characteristic of a small but powerful clique in Russia. These men occupy high places, it is true, and their influence is great; but the Grand-Ducal influence would be reduced to vanishing-point if Germany's bloodthirsty ambitions were unmasked, checkmated and prepared for by the nations concerned.

The key to the position in Russia is found in the fact that, alone among the nations of Europe, she possesses no port accessible to shipping all the year round. Even the waters of the Black Sea at Odessa are frozen in hard winters. Since the time of Peter the Great, Russia has been struggling towards the south. When her way south was barred by the might of Britain and the jealousies of Europe, she pushed her frontiers eastward. Leaf by leaf she devoured the artichoke of Northern Asia. After building a railway across the trackless steppes of Siberia, she reached the sea, only to find an implacable foe more efficient and better prepared for war than the ancient civilizations of the West. The preliminary defeats of Russia by Japan, the capture of Port Arthur and even the destruction of the whole of General Kuropatkin's force, could not affect the main policy of Russia, which is to acquire a port in warm waters accessible to her ships of war and of commerce from January to December.

This desire of the Russian Government and the Russian people for a warm-water port is instinctive. The movement towards the sea and the south is like the movement of a glacier. It is irresistible and it is the result of natural law. When men write, therefore, that the seizure of Manchuria was the idle ambition of a vainglorious despotism, they speak only of what is on the surface. The locality of the warm-water port, whether in the Dardanelles, the Persian Gulf or the China Seas, is comparatively immaterial. The great point is that the volcanic energy of 130,-

000,000 white Northerners is now pent up and will break through the crust of opposition as the lava from an active volcano finds a new crater when the forces of expansion are stronger than the superincumbent earth.

To understand this point, let us ask ourselves how long Great Britain or the United States would have waited before obtaining a warm-water port, if their respective territories were inhabited by 130,000,000 Anglo-Saxons, and if all the ports of both countries were inaccessible during one season of the year. Neither country would have waited two hundred years, and Russia will not wait a day longer than she is obliged. This desire for a warm-water port is the key to Russian policy. The substitution of constitutional government for the despotic Tsardom would not change this policy. On the contrary, the more efficient the Government of Russia may become, the more certain she is to attain the object of her ambition.

The next point to understand, in connection with the situation in Russia, is the extent to which ignorance is the bed-rock upon which the Government rests. The dense ignorance of the people is necessary to the continuance of the present system. The Russian Church is crusted with superstitious practices, and the worship of ikons by the peasantry is indistinguishable from the worship of idols by the natives of the Solomon Islands or the worship of the figures of Buddha by the Tatars or the Thibetans. The ignorance of the Russian people is not confined to the peasantry. The Government and the Church are opposed to education as such. Students of the Universities at Moscow, Kieff and other cities are constantly at variance with the authorities. Places of learning are closed for a session or a year as the consequence of political excitement, and sotnias of Cossacks are employed to chase in the streets and flog with their whips insurrectionary students whose love of liberty leads them to utter seditious ideas. The consequence of this struggle between education and authority is that the *tchinovniks* are ill-educated, and hence efficiency in the public service is rare. A chain is not stronger than its weakest link, and preparation for war at a distance involves high character, devotion to duty, and organizing power on the part of the humblest as well as the highest members of an expedition.

The failure of Russia in the Far East was inevitable. Five

years ago, she was flogging and banishing the students who are the officials of to-day. The best brains of the Empire are ignored; petticoat influence and alcohol play a leading part in Russian policy and administration. The inebriety of her officials is no worse than the excesses among English statesmen and officials in the reign of George II. But no modern nation can sustain the burden of successful war or administer the affairs of a prosperous country with such officials as swarm in the public service of Russia.

The dissolute and avaricious relations of the Tsar who mould the policy of Russia, irrespective of Imperial or Ministerial decisions, are persons to whom there is no parallel in other lands. Their influence broods over the people like an evil genius. No change for the better can be expected until the power of the Grand-Dukes is permanently abated.

To understand the position of Russia in relation to peace and war, it is also necessary to understand the position of Germany, the great, despotic, military ally of the Northern Power. The real danger of European war is to be found in the present attitude of Germany towards Russia. Germany is the only nation in Europe that has anything to gain by war. It is a well-known fact that the Kaiser has warily felt his way, during the last few months, towards a declaration of hostility in various directions. German diplomacy, and still more the German press, have done their level best to embitter the relations of England and Russia, of Russia and France, of England and France, of Russia and the United States. The feelings of the Russian peasantry have been inflamed against Great Britain by the *tchinovniks*; the feelings of the *tchinovniks* have been inflamed against Great Britain by the Grand-Dukes; and the interests of the Grand-Dukes have been invoked by German diplomacy with consummate skill against the interests of Britain and the United States. It is owing to German intrigue in Madrid that France and Spain were unable to come to a serious and final arrangement concerning Morocco, and were compelled for the present to shelve the question. The immediate aim of Germany is the occupation of Holland; for, by that means, at one stroke a colonial empire, second only in wealth to that of Great Britain, would be added to the possessions of the Hohenzollerns. The seizure of Holland would have been carried out by Germany if an *entente*

had not been concluded with considerable haste between Great Britain, France and Italy. The recent friendship between France and Britain did not arise from any sudden discovery that each admired the beautiful eyes of the other, but from a resolve to maintain things in Europe as they are, and, consequently, to fight Germany rather than allow Queen Wilhelmina's dominions to be annexed, penetrated or occupied by German troops.

If we are to believe German writers, the German army has entered or is about to enter a period of decadence. Prolonged peace is the bane of an army. No German officer under the rank of general has seen a gun fired in anger against white men. Anti-militarism has appeared and is growing in the Fatherland, and Herr Liebknecht, the son of the late Socialist leader, is working a powerful propaganda against militarism. German finances are in a "parlous" state; the deficits are yearly increasing; the petty war in West Africa has disorganized the finances; public works in progress have been stopped for lack of funds; even the demands of the General Staff have been set aside. There is much distress among the poorer classes. The food consumed by many is not only unappetizing, but abominable. In a number of the industrial centres, human beings herded like animals. The condition of the peasants in Prussia, Silesia, and Thuringia is terrible. Horrible misery is hidden behind the flimsy fabric of politico-humanitarian institutions which deceive the superficial inquiries from other lands. These institutions are but the pitiless travesty of State providence, and are already crumbling to their doom. The overbearing behavior of the military and of the bureaucrats, the insolence of the Jewish rich and the aristocratic contempt of the *Junkers* are intolerable. There is a strong current of profound discontent. Germany is ceasing to be the land of advanced thought. Recently a book was published entitled "Is Woman a Human Being?" The question was answered in the negative, and this book was seriously and generally discussed everywhere. At a congress of scientific men held at Frankfurt, it was proposed to erect outside all the big towns large barracks for the unfortunates. The proposal was adopted. The tendency to militarize everything is universal. Even children suffer from it. Children's suicides are frequent owing to ill-treatment and overwork. The great bulk of the German population is increasingly dissatisfied with the existing régime.

The press and the authorities attribute these deplorable effects to the wrong causes. Great Britain's hostility is represented as the origin of the mischief. The rebellion of the Hereros, which so sorely taxes German financial resources, is attributed to the provocations of English agents. It is insinuated that the rebellion is maintained by British gold.

Germany is the stronghold of the Jewish power. The great Hebrew financial families, almost without exception, hail from the Fatherland. They are the masters of the situation. Their control over peace and war is almost absolute. The sufferings of their coreligionists in Russia do not prevent them from financing the persecuting Power. The ring of the shekel drowns the moan of the Ghetto. The German Jews have nothing to lose by a war; much to gain. There is a strong reason why they would like to see European nations embroiled in strife. They know that if Germany is to wait until the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph, the Kaiser would be compelled to find his outlet on the shores of the Mediterranean. This is a prospect which they do not relish, because, if Prussia, where they are omnipotent, were to join with Austria, the anti-Semitism of Austria would reduce, if it did not annul, their influence in Prussia. It is by no means owing to the influence of the Vatican alone that the extension of Pan-Germanism has been checked in Austria. The Jews, who are the shrewdest diplomatists in the world, recognize that Pan-Germanism is hostile to Jewry in Austria. The German Jews are not naval men and none of them are to be found on board German battle-ships, and therefore the German Jews have no liking for German enterprise southwards. When Germany extends her territory to the Adriatic, the situation of the Jews will be precarious. It is quite possible that a great federal republic, strong enough even to defy the Kaiser, may follow the break-up of the Empire of the Hapsburgs. For these reasons, the Jews who have nothing to lose by a war with England are opposed to action southwards.

The Kaiser is one of the most brilliant, lovable and fascinating personalities of the day. It is enough to be brought into contact with him to recognize the magnetism he emits in conversation with men and women. Impressionable women might worship him as a demigod; impressionable men might adore him as Gourgaud adored Napoleon. Still, this military diplomatist, the Kaiser William II, is a factor of war. It must not be forgotten that

his ambitions are boundless, and his capacity, according to the popular estimate, is undeniable. Many shrewd judges have their doubts as to His Majesty's practical capacity. Up to the present time, the Kaiser has spoken enormously. As an orator, he is fluent, voluminous and emotional; but his speeches bulk more largely than his achievements. Compare the Germany of 1888 with the Germany of 1904. What has he done? Where is the difference in favor of the new ruler? He is no longer a young man, and he knows that he will be judged by history, if not by his contemporaries, not according to what he has said, but according to what he has done; and he also knows that he will be judged not by what he does in the future, but by what he does now, for it is the simple truth that never again will the stars in their courses give him the chances which are offered to-day. And, furthermore, do not let us lose sight of the fact that, as all roads lead to Rome, so all the schemes that the busy brains of German statesmen concoct are directed, sooner or later, and in some form or another, against the existence of Great Britain.

President Roosevelt's election as Chief of the Great Republic has removed from the path of the Kaiser the one difficulty that stood in his way. When President Roosevelt publicly accepted the bronze statue of Frederick the Great which the German Emperor offered as "a gift of friendship to the American people," no ceremony was wanting, no splendor was lacking to mark the President's sense of the Emperor's kindly purpose. The delay in the erection of the statue occupied German public opinion for more than two years. Had a Democratic President been elected, the rising against the commercial trusts in the United States would have reverberated in Germany and would have rendered the situation in the Fatherland insecure. Trusts, cartels, monopolies are as powerful in Germany as in the United States, and the Kaiser derives his chief support from these influences. Hence the delay in accepting the statue of Frederick the Great, and hence the enthusiastic telegram which the Kaiser despatched when President Roosevelt's election was announced.

With the United States neutral, Russia friendly, France impotent and England blind, the situation is favorable to a move on the part of Germany. For the first time since the birth of the Empire at Versailles, Germany has nothing to fear from Russia. Great Britain, with incredible lethargy, has ignored the les-



sons of the Boer war. Her finances are disorganized; she has no army worth speaking of; and her fleet, though numerous, is armed for the most part by guns which are denounced in Admiral Togo's secret reports to the Japanese Admiralty as "useless in modern war." The most obvious move for Germany is to find some way of throwing Great Britain and Russia against each other. Germany has done her best in this direction. For the present, she has failed; but there is no reason why the failure to ignite the explosive mixture of Anglo-Russian jealousies may not succeed another time.

The second string of the German Emperor, but his real objective, is a move towards Holland. There is little doubt, if not in consequence of the recent Anglo-French convention, at all events to safeguard their own interests, that in that event the French would mobilize their forces with as little delay as possible. But how could France attack Germany? There are only two French lines of attack, both of them intersecting neutral ground—one passes over the mountains of Switzerland, the other through the plains of Belgium. The question arises whether the Belgians would concede to the French army a free passage through their country, which is still the cockpit of Europe. If Germany and France only were in question the answer might be doubtful. Great Britain being interested in the fray, the answer is not in doubt. Belgium and the Belgians hate England and the English. The antipathy of the Belgians for the English is insensate, mainly because the English press has justly attacked the horrible administration of the Congo State. The Belgian army is by no means contemptible from the military point of view; and, if it defended Belgian territory against the French, German troops would gain ample time to enter Holland and to occupy the strategic points therein. If the English army were ready at an hour's notice to embark for Holland and seize the strategic points, thus giving time to the French army to overcome Belgian resistance, Germany might not dare to seize the favorable opportunity that now presents itself. But it is not ready. The one question, therefore, to-day is: Will the Kaiser dare to attack Holland? It seems that he has some difficulty in making up his mind, and that he finds it necessary, before making a forward move, to set his Russian and English neighbors by the ears. If the Kaiser dallies too long, he may lose his opportunity; and, although he

may desire a more propitious state of things than that existing at present for the realization of his projects, it is unlikely that it will occur.

No wise man supposes that war is about to die a natural death. A few years ago, the late M. de Bloch wrote some clever books about the effect of quick-firing guns and long-range repeating rifles. According to him, war had been rendered impossible. M. Bloch's views were exploded by the South-African war, and by the still more dramatic events of the war in the Far East. To men like the Japanese samurai, nurtured in the traditions of the knightly spirit of Bushido, there are no bullet-swept impassable zones. In no previous wars have intrenchments been so often successfully stormed. Napier does not record the capture of so many batteries under the régime of Brown Bess as are recorded since the modern rifle was invented. War has become more brutal. It is reverting to its primitive aspects. Germany to-day represents war, and Germany must be strictly watched and checked. The expansion of the German population, the impossibility of extension southwards, eastwards, or westwards, necessitates the capture either of Holland or of colonies or of both. Before the manifest destiny of Germany to collide with England, anti-Russian prejudices ought to disappear, and the British public should narrowly examine its antipathy to Russia and sympathy for the Japanese who hesitated so cautiously as to whether their movement for expansion should be made in the direction of Korea, Indo-China or Australia.

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